

The Halyard

Virginia Department of Education
Office of Educational Technology

March 17, 2006



Charlie's Chatter

Wow! Last week I found a great group of readers and this week a great group of fashion-conscious aliens! I really enjoy being invited to come to the schools and sharing in the special activities that showcase the wonderful work that you are doing.

This week's edition of the Halyard features my visit to Hamilton Holmes Middle School in King William and my day spent at the James Regional held at Longwood University. See both stories inside!

My thanks go to Terri Lent, in Hanover County who found not only the author of that great poem I printed recently, but she also learned that I only had a part of the poem. So I am reprinting it in its entirety.



<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Technology/OET/library.shtml>

Write it on your heart...

Write it on your heart
that every day is the best day in the year.
He is rich who owns the day,
and no one owns the day
who allows it to be invaded with fret and anxiety.
Finish every day and be done with it.
You have done what you could.
Some blunders and absurdities, no doubt, crept in.
Forget them as soon as you can, tomorrow is a
new day;
begin it well and serenely,
with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense.
This new day is too dear, with its hopes and invitations,
to waste a moment on the yesterdays...

Ralph Waldo Emerson

<http://www.allspirit.co.uk/emerson.html>

Alien Invasions!

Roswell, New Mexico has never experienced an alien invasion the magnitude of the sightings at Hamilton-Holmes Middle School in King William, Virginia.

As 7th grade students began to research invasive alien species (such as kudzu, snakeheads, flathead catfish, gypsy moth), the excitement began to mount. Students presented their research through posters, PowerPoint presentations, newscasts and even presented themselves as "dramatic nuisances" at a PTA Community night to encourage our residents to learn all they can about the real problems of invasive aliens.

Some students extended their research to math activities to demonstrate the exponential growth of kudzu and mute swans. The highlight of the evening was the "runway fashion show" featuring creative alien costumes that students had designed and constructed themselves. The fashion show was completed with everybody doing the latest alien dance craze "The Zebra Mussle Hustle."

This activity is a result of collaboration between Audrey Mitchell, librarian, the art teacher and the 7th grade team. It is an outgrowth of last summer's workshop, Turning Ugly Ducklings Into Swans.



St. Patrick's Day Trivia



Wearing green is strictly a U.S. custom, as the color green is not popular in Ireland. Green is connected to the old green flag and a time when Ireland was not free. Green is also a color connected with hope and nature.

The Blarney Stone is a stone set in the wall of the Blarney Castle tower in the Irish village of Blarney. Kissing the

stone is supposed to bring the kisser the gift of persuasive eloquence. The legend says that an old woman cast a spell on the stone to reward a king who had saved her from drowning. Kissing the stone while under the spell gave the king the ability to speak sweetly and convincingly. It's difficult reach the stone. Kissers have to lie on their back

and bend backward or downward, holding iron bars for support.

When yawning, make the sign of the cross instantly over your mouth, or the evil spirit will make a rush down and take up his abode with you.

It is unlucky to offer your right hand in
(Continued on page 3)

The Younger the Better

Reading aloud to young children can help them acquire the information and skills they need to succeed in school and life, such as understanding the difference between written language and everyday conversation, learning the meaning of many words and the world in which they live and of great importance-discovering the pleasure of reading.

Here are some suggestions for reading aloud to children:

Make reading books an enjoyable experience. Choose a comfortable place where the children can sit near you. Help them feel safe and secure. Be enthusiastic about reading.

Read to children frequently. Establish regular times for reading during the day, and find other opportunities to read:

- Start or end the day with a book.
- Read to children after a morning play period, which also helps settle them down.
- Read to them during snack time or before nap time.

Help children to learn as you read. Explain words that they may not know. Point out how the pictures in a book relate to the story. Talk about the characters' actions and feelings.

Ask children questions as you read. Ask questions that help children connect the story with their own lives or that help them to compare the book with other books that they have read.

Encourage children to talk about the book. Ask them to talk about their favorite parts and encourage them to tell the story in their own words.

Read many kinds of books. Read books with characters and situations both simi-

lar and dissimilar to those in the children's lives so they can learn about the world.

Choose books to help you teach. Use alphabet books to help you teach the names of the letters and the sounds, counting books to teach children how to count and recognize numbers, poetry or rhyming books to support your teaching of phonological awareness, and big books (oversized books that your children can easily see) to point out letters, words, and other features of print and to teach book handling.

Reread favorite books. Children love to hear their favorite books over and over again. Hearing books read several times helps children understand and notice new things.

The suggestions in this article are excerpted from a publication released last month, entitled Teaching Our Youngest: A Guide for Preschool Teachers, Child Care & Family Providers. For a free copy, while supplies last, call 1--877--4ED--PUBS and ask for item EA 0203P, or visit <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/teachingouryoungest>.



Mattie shows us how it is done!
She is the granddaughter of one of Virginia's librarians
(names withheld to protect privacy)

St. Patrick's Day Trivia

(Continued from page 2)

salutation, for thee is an old say, "A curse with the left hand to those we hate, but the right hand to those we honor."

If the palm of your hand itches you will be getting money; if the elbow, you will be changing beds.



Breaking a mirror brought seven years

of bad luck, while two people washing hands in the same basin at the same time courted disaster.

Many people will be eating Irish food such as Irish Stew and Corned Beef and cabbage on St. Patrick's Day. Corned Beef is not an Irish dish. It is what Americans think the Irish eat. A more traditional meal would be ham and cabbage or bacon and cabbage.

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We can not control the wind but we can adjust the sails.

VEMA- James Regional

If you left before the general session, you missed a real treat! Sherilyn Creative Characters stole the show with their skit introducing the Library Media Assistant Model 2006. Some of you may remember seeing this skit last year at the Roanoke Regional. Complete with audience participation, the skit showed that even a robot can not keep up with the pressure of being one of today's school librarians.

Prior to the skit, there was also a wonderful presentation by four librarians who spoke on the greatest challenges facing librarians today. All of us from the ones just beginning to those of us who are facing upcoming retirement could easily identify with the challenges outlined by the speakers. Keeping up with new trends and practices, keeping our technology skills fresh, keeping and developing partnerships, keeping instruction focused and

relevant and keeping our image as information goddesses were challenges we all could claim as our own.

The concurrent sessions were fantastic with a good mix of technology and books and lots of time to visit the vendors and reacquainting ourselves with old friends while making new ones.

Sessions covered topics such as School Interoperability Framework, weeding, economics, visual literacy and the research process, outcomes of Turning Ugly Ducklings Into Swans, building those collaborative projects, Linking Libraries and so much more. The presenters continue to excite and challenge us to continue to provide outstanding lessons for our students.

Nancy Williams and her committee showed all of us how to succeed at meeting the challenge of providing

an outstanding day of professional growth opportunities.

March 28, will find VEMA at the Clinch regional in Abingdon and March 29 will be Roanoke's at the Higher Education Center and to finish the week VEMA will be at the Rappahannock Region in its new location at Mountain View High School in Stafford County. If you have not registered yet, please make plans to do so by filling out the registration forms available at <http://www.vema.gen.va.us>

See you there!